

JAMES L. BUCKLEY

P.O. Box 597

January 24, 2005

The Honorable Ted Stevens
522 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Ted:

Twenty-six years ago, after leaving the Senate, I was a lead signatory in full-page ads opposing oil exploration in the Arctic National Wildlife Reserve that appeared in the New York Times and the Washington Post. I opposed it because, based on the information then available, I believed that it would threaten the survival of the Porcupine caribou herd and leave huge, long-lasting scars on fragile Arctic lands. Since then, caribou populations in the areas of Prudhoe Bay and the Alaskan pipeline have increased, which demonstrates that the Porcupine herd would not be threatened, and new regulations limiting activities to the winter months and mandating the use of ice roads and directional drilling have vastly reduced the impact of oil operations on the Arctic landscape.

In light of the above, I have revised my views and now urge approval of oil development in the 1002 Study Area for the following reasons:

1. With proper management, I don't see that any significant damage to arctic wildlife would result, and none that wouldn't rapidly be repaired once operation ceased.
2. While I don't buy the oil companies' claim that only 2,000 acres would be affected, even if all of the 1.5 million-acre Study Area were to lose its pristine quality (it wouldn't), that would still leave 18.1 million acres of the ANWR untouched plus another five million acres in two adjoining Canadian wildlife refuges, or an area about equal to that of the States of Connecticut, Massachusetts, Vermont, and New Hampshire combined. In other words, it is simply preposterous to claim that oil development in the Study Area would "destroy" the critical values that ANWR is intended to serve.
3. In light of the above, it is economic and (to a much lesser degree) strategic masochism to deny ourselves access to what could prove our largest source of a vital resource.

Having visited the Arctic on nine occasions over the past 13 years (including a recent camping trip on Alaska's North Slope), I don't think I can be accused of being insensitive to the charms of the Arctic *qua* Arctic. I just don't see the threat to values I cherish.

With best regards,

Sincerely,

